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[illegible] Bush Negroes [illegible]
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world, and they flung it at each other proudly, for it stood for the experience of making their way among strangers and earning sums with which to fill a large corial, and much else.

The men who had remained on the river found special pleasure in imparting to these returning ones some weighty gossip.

"At Gankwe they are burying Sedefo's younger brother," they said as the boats passed each other, and they went into the details of Zimbi's death and the kunu which was decimating the family.

"Asikanu has been charged with adultery by Matafo. Asikanu's family is offering a great fine, but it is far from settled yet."

All this was by way of preface. To come to the real news without casual preliminaries would have been the way of a child, but a Man Nengere, a full-grown Negro, knew better.

"Last year a white man came here with another one—a doctor. He said he would come back with his wife. He has brought his wife. He says they are going up the river. He says they are going to the Granman's country."

Up and down the great stretches of water as the boats passed each other, the news was given. Word and conjecture floated down river and into the creeks, reaching even the lower river Awka villages.

"The Bakra told me Awka is an African word. There is a place in Africa called Awka, and a people in Africa called Awka people. He knows Africa!"

"Kye, ba! Kye, mati!"

Word and conjecture were carried up river in the boats which were being poled upstream against the rapids. It would be some time yet before there would be legends, and songs about the American whites who had made their way into this bush. Now there could only be talk. The Bakra had a machine which talked back to you, if you talked into its horn, and when it talked back, it said the same thing you did, sang back the same song, and if you laughed, it laughed, too.

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484 And after they had inquired of each other's health, they
576 were well past each other, making in opposite directions,
521 but continuing their colloquy.

Bayo said, "I am on my way to the Bakra's camp. I am to be one of his paddlers. Today we start up the river. He is going to the Granman's country."

"I am going to Tunkahai. My sister's son died on the Marowyne. His wife is to come out of mourning. We shall have good dancing tonight."

Bayo's boat was disappearing in the bend of the river.

"Adiosi, adiosi-o. Adiosi, adiosi-o!" he sang out his goodbye, pitching his voice so low and so well that it seemed to penetrate not only the entire river, but the very thickness of the forest which hemmed it in. The response came back to him as a faint, cadenced song.

"Ooo oo oo . . . oo!" he sang out, placing his hand against his mouth to make the sound carry. And the answering call came back true as a bird's call.

484 Now he was in the rapids again, and stood at the stern with dilated nostrils and head thrown forward. When he was through the whirling eddies and in quieter water once more, he adjusted his loin cloth carefully and sat down and
[139] began paddling. The green-heart trees were beginning to bloom. Fine trees. They belonged to another clan. He and his great-grandfather went for their timber below. There was plenty of timber in this bush of theirs. The gods of the bush were strong, and the ancestors had done well for the country. In a week these channels would be gone. Right about him everywhere jagged rocks would show. In a week, or before then, they would play the drums for the gods of the river, sounding their call to the sun to come and dry and warm them, and the sun, hearing the call, would send his fire to the river banks, and the rains would end.

Was that a boat overtaking him? The cool of the morning was a time to be about. Who was that?

"Tio, greetings," he said to the man, who seemed in a
[576] great hurry.

"Thank you, tio. . . . "

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away from the river? When the big rains come, the river goes up more and more. If our crops were too close to the water, then in the big rains the land would be flooded, and the crops long under water. . . . Yes, and we have to think of the ants, too. Ants, once they find their way into a field, will destroy everything. They like especially the green leaves of the young cassava plants. When the young leaves go, there is no cassava. So we move farther and farther away for our fields. Two, three years, and new fields must be cut, so that the yield might feed us all."

Once a field had been deserted, say, for five years, why did they not reclaim it later? we enquired, for by that time the big bush would have made fertile again the soil that had been exhausted.

"In this bush we do it like that. Why, I don't know. Our ancestors found much land for us. When we want new fields, we cut farther and farther into the bush."

5

As Bayo and Angita set off for the dance at Pa'aba, Kasanya and Sedefo joined us, and we talked of crops and planting, of woman's work and man's, of good harvests and bad, and this is what was told us.

Finding a new field and clearing it is a man's task. If a man is about to be married, or if the field a man's wife works has become exhausted, then he goes into the forest, near to the planting ground of his mother and to the fields of his family, and casts about for a place to clear. A field must not be in a hollow, or the crops will not grow, and rice needs the sun of a hill slope to thrive. Once having found a spot where the drainage is good, he looks about to see if the spirits will allow its use. Patiently, painstakingly, he goes from one clump of matted vines to the next, machete in hand, searching for signs of an ant hill, or an Akatasi tree that is sacred to the gods of the ant hill, or for snakes, or a natural clearing belonging to the Apuku gods of the bush. No silk-cotton tree must be there, no loko tree wherein dwells the god of the same name so near that it

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Now it was the Granman's turn to supply the interpolations, while Kasanya and Bibifo reported.

"Yes, so it is. So I know it to be myself. So I have heard," he spoke when they paused.

But when the ceremonial greetings were over, and the conversation turned to down-river affairs, the Granman leaned forward in his chair and talked with the men informally. They were all clan members, or men belonging to clans whose allegiance to the Granman's rule was undoubted, and they talked over many things in the way men do when they meet with their own kind.

The room was growing darker. Yankuso called through the slatted wall against which he was leaning, and the young man who had fired the guns entered.

"Bassia, it is getting late. We must leave this house to the white man. These men with me are my friends. They must drink before they leave."

The bassia took the decanter from the table, and from the shelf underneath it, where we could dimly see shells and containers of shot, he took several small glasses. Before taking the glass to his lips, each man poured some of the liquor on the ground as a libation to the Earth Mother, and, as each drank, he turned to Yankuso and asked if he might leave.

"*Mi da permissi*—I grant you permission," he said to each.

When we had finished our meal, it was already dark. At the door of his own house, Granman Yankuso was sitting on a low stool.

"I have something for you," he said, disappearing inside his house. When he came out, he held in his hand some black object, which we were unable to identify. "You have fire?" he asked, as he suspended this object from a tree which grew between his house and the one in which we were staying.

"There was a white Hollander here who brought this to me. He went from here farther into the bush. He never came out. Light is a good thing at night. When visitors

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437 The reply is short and spirited.

"Gimme."

Which does not have to be translated.

574 We sleep that night in the Bush Negro village. A dilapi-
609 dated hut is assigned us, the hut of a dead man. There are
136 tarantulas on the cross-poles; we are not particular. The paddlers sleep elsewhere, being taken into friendly huts about the village. Except for the ghosts of the departed Bush Negroes, our hut is quite empty. The hammock is slung and the mosquito netting put in place. Mosquitoes and insect pests are not as bad in the jungle as commonly reported. They seldom caused us any discomfort. It is true that one of the boys contracted malaria during an expedition, but the parasites may have been dormant in his blood for some time previously. Our precaution against malaria was ten grains of quinine sulphate each night before retiring under the mosquito netting.

512 [521] Far into the evening the Negroes will sit around the campfire and tell stories, their loud, musical Negro laughter carrying a long distance on the night air. Walking by each hut we see a tiny light flickering inside. Occasionally an infant cries. We sit before our doorway, amusing a group of chil-

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314 shot enters the rubber but does not pierce it through. Little dents indicate where the shot is buried inside. With a pistol, however, the result is different. A bullet from a .38 calibre revolver goes clean through. After we have fired, a Negro detaches himself from the group and disappears in the bush. In twenty minutes he is back, bringing the bullet from the revolver. He had traced its course by broken twigs and
[151] clipped branches, and finally dug it out of the side of a tree with his bush-knife—on the whole an extraordinary bit of woodcraft.

484 It is disgusting to find that we have to sleep overnight in this camp. The white man is thoroughly exhausted, able only to drop down on a log while the Negroes make camp. The bahkra's hammock is slung and a fire started. Monkey meat is the *pièce de résistance* of the evening meal.

[252 The monkey is not skinned; only the hair is scraped off.
262] Monkey skin is a jungle delicacy, but there is a humanly cadaverous look to the depilated body. Half of the meat is cut up and dumped into the stew pot together with rice and salt.
[251] The other half is smoked liberally to preserve it for the morrow.

Not in the mood to take food which his stomach might reject, the bahkra dines on a can of salmon, with rice and tea on the side. The sun has hardly set when he falls gratefully into the hammock and ties the mosquito netting in place, ready for profound slumber.

521 He soon finds that sleep is out of the question. The Bush Negroes are sitting about the campfire swapping tales of

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former hunts. What a noise they make! At the crucial point 521
of the story they imitate the explosion of the gun.

Excitedly: *"Me luku, me see one biggie teegre* (jaguar). *Me makke gunu go BOOM!"*

After shouting this last with the greatest volume that his throat is capable of producing, the narrator imitates the sound of the dead body crashing through the branches to the ground. All the thrill of the day's hunt is not merely remembered, it is re-lived in realistic detail. The snarl of the wounded cat, the gasping, baby-like cry of the wounded platyrrhine, bring forth appreciative laughter from the intent audience. Soon the next man tells his story; the bond of sympathy is so close that they all go BOOM together. One jungle inhabitant has triumphed over another, in memory.

While we curse in our efforts to sleep there comes through 533
the darkness a Djuka folk-song. It conveys the pointed moral of a man who thought himself very clever, but despite that he is now sleeping at the bottom of the river:

Cony mong,
Cony mong,
Dede na leeba.

or, "Cunning man, cunning man, dead in the river." At least, we reflect, with the sardonic grimness of tortured insomnia, he is now able to sleep.

/206 cont./
153 791 787 786 [789] containing seeds). Sometimes, when a god has entered a pupil, the teacher puts the latter's passivity to the test by insulting the god with the help of the drum. The Kumẽnti gets angry, breaks bottles and swallows ground glass, walks in the fire, hits himself with machete blows, all without any wound resulting, they say, on the body of its bearer.

[302] These frenzied dances, whose participants completely covered with pɛmba (white clay) are as if hallucinated, have a bizarre aspect which is perceptible to some of the Boni themselves. They do not have any secret character and constitute, [522] on the contrary, a fine spectacle for the village people. The spectators double up with laughter at the contortions and strange actions which the gods inspire in those possessed. They are [521] talked about at length /207/ afterward in the evenings, humorists imitating what they saw done there, without any fear whatever of irritating the gods.

791 787 346 Each "teacher for Kumẽnti" owns a small gadu ɔsu in which are lined up the implements of the cult. One finds in general in these chapels a post crudely carved in the shape of a human bust, a block of stone, jaguar skulls, some kɔkɔti (shrub stalks with a spontaneous double bend, thought to be the prop of spirits in the bush), and a saka (maraka), the whole sprinkled with white clay (pɛmba). One finds also beside the door a seat and a trough which are used for the ablutions of the pupils.

153 791 787 788 While bathing his body with the infusion of leaves prepared by the teacher, the neophyte repeats, in ordinary language, a series of invocations: "Come to me, enter into me. But before entering into me, it is necessary to teach me the things of thy country; O God, when thou art in me, may I be able to dance on broken glass without its cutting me; may I be able to dance in fire without its burning me. If tomorrow someone takes a machete to hurt me, he shall not be able to come forward. If someone takes a gun to shoot me, (his weapon) must break, must not be able to take off. If someone is sick, make an ɔbia for him, he must recover."